



South Dakota Telecommunications Association

South Dakota Telecommunications Association  
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March 23, 2010

Ms. Marlene Dortch  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20554

RE: National Broadband Plan, GN Docket No. 09-51  
High-Cost Universal Service Support, WC Docket No. 05-337

Dear Ms. Dortch,

On March 22, 2010, Denny Law of Golden West Telecommunications Cooperative, Randy Houdek of Venture Communications Cooperative and the undersigned met with Edward P. Lazarus, Chief of Staff to Chairman Genachowski to discuss the deployment of broadband services in tribal areas in South Dakota.

In the meeting, Mr. Law and Mr. Houdek commented on the widespread availability of broadband services in tribal areas served by rural telecommunications providers in South Dakota, as well as the need for continued USF programs to support existing broadband networks and rural carrier operations already existing in Tribal areas. The recognition of existing rural telecommunications providers in the potential creation of a Tribal Broadband Fund as recommended by the National Broadband Plan as well as support for programs that encourage broadband adoption on tribal lands was also discussed.

In addition, there was brief discussion concerning (1) the need for FCC action to prevent the imposition of a universal service support penalty in those situations where rural telephone company subscribers wish to subscribe only to broadband service, without maintaining their traditional voice line; and (2) expansion of the USF contribution mechanism.

General information concerning SDTA's members was provided. A copy of this information is attached.

Please contact the undersigned if there are any questions concerning this filing.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Richard Coit  
Richard Coit  
Executive Director

cc: Edward P. Lazarus

# South Dakota Telecommunications Association **Who are we?**

- 20 incumbent landline providers
  - 12 member-owner cooperatives
  - 4 privately-owned companies
    - 2 family-owned companies
    - 2 corporately-owned
  - 3 municipal companies
  - 1 tribal authority



# South Dakota Telecommunications Association **Who are we?**

- **Mostly serve small towns and rural areas**
  - **Largest communities we serve are:**
    - Brookings (pop. 18,504)
    - Brandon (pop. 5,693)
    - Hot Springs (pop. 4,129)
    - Pine Ridge (pop. 3,171)
  - **Population density of areas served by SDTA member: approx. 4 people/sq. mile**
    - 11 counties have less than 2 people/sq. mile
    - (sources: U.S. Census Bureau and SD Public Utilities Commission)
  - **West River Telecom, Bison, SD**
    - Service area: 6,209 square miles (28% larger than state of Connecticut)
    - 3,452 access lines
      - .56 lines per square mile





# South Dakota Telecommunications Association **Who are we?**

- Our members collectively:
  - serve **79.5% of South Dakota** (service areas cover more than **61,000 square miles**)
  - serve more than 160,000 access lines
  - own more than **21,000 miles of buried fiber optic line**
  - supply broadband service to more than **250 communities** (most with populations of less than 1,000)
  - offer digital video to more than 80 communities
  - provide wireless broadband in select areas





**Thank you for  
your time!**

